OLD PATTERNS, NEW ORDER

In partnership with The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum, IERES organized an exhibition titled “Old Patterns, New Order” devoted to works from the Socialist Realist art movement in Central Asia, featuring twentieth-century paintings. The Soviet Union sought to modernize Central Asia and present it as an example of what socialism could bring to the Islamic world, as well as to developing countries in general. However, the region maintained a tenuous balance between its Muslim cultural heritage and Soviet atheist modernism throughout the 20th century. This balance is particularly apparent in the region’s Socialist Realist art, which was supported by the state, but often inspired by local cultural traditions. Furthermore, the region’s distance from the administrative center of the Soviet Union frequently allowed its artistic community to experiment with styles and themes with less scrutiny from the state than experienced by those in the European regions of the USSR. The result was a unique school of art that combined Soviet monumentalism with Orientalist exoticism, local cultural influences, and parochial nationalism—a variety of Socialist Realism that was distinctly both Soviet and Central Asian.
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION AWARDS IERES $3 MILLION GRANT TO PROMOTE URBAN SUSTAINABILITY IN THE ARCTIC

In September 2015, the National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded a team of IERES scholars a $3 million grant to study urban sustainability in the Arctic region. The team includes Project Director Robert Orttung (photo on the right), Marlene Laruelle, Nikolai Shiklomanov, and Dmitry Streletskiy. The new award builds on work underway since 2012, when the NSF awarded the institute a $500,000 grant to build a new network of scholars conducting research on Arctic urban sustainability. The project has already resulted in numerous articles and a book. More publications are forthcoming.

As the Arctic ice continues to melt, humans will enter the high north in growing numbers to develop local resources and expand transportation links. The result of this increased activity will be intensified urban development in extreme conditions. The purpose of the IERES project is to promote greater urban sustainability in the Arctic so that the ultimate human impact on the larger environment will be as small as possible. To achieve such a challenging goal, this Partnership for International Research and Education (PIRE) grant will bring together scientists from the U.S., Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Norway and Russia. Developing strong cooperation among the various Arctic countries, as well as other European and Asian countries with growing interests in the north, is necessary to ensure that future development in this polar region is managed effectively. With the U.S. chairing the Arctic Council from May 2015 to May 2017, this PIRE grant will improve the ability of policy-makers to promote sustainability by providing tools to measure progress, identify areas of most urgent need, select verifiable best practices, examine opportunity costs, and determine where external actors can have the greatest impact.

Specifically, this project will develop an Arctic Urban Sustainability Index, which will make it possible to assess the consequences of human activities in the region across a number of important dimensions. The Index will be used to measure sustainability outcomes and progress toward achieving those outcomes in a wide variety of Arctic cities (see picture above). Key elements of the index will include thawing permafrost, a boom-bust economic cycle, and an influx of migrant workers with a possible increase in social tensions. Our central hypothesis posits that: Measuring sustainability efforts across the full range of scale and mechanisms and compiling the results in the form of an index will trigger efforts to improve urban planning. The project will be multi-disciplinary in nature, incorporating the analytical tools of geography, climatology, architecture, design, sociology, and political science. Importantly, the Index will not be limited to use in the Arctic. It could be effective in measuring sustainability in other extreme climate conditions, such as in the new cities rising in the Persian Gulf and in places like Phoenix, Arizona.
In June 2015, PONARS Eurasia, in partnership with Nazarbayev University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, held a policy workshop in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. The theme was “Security and Regional Integration in Eurasia.” PONARS Eurasia workshops promote the integration of Western and Russian/Eurasian scholarly communities while providing incentives for academic members of the network to prioritize policy-relevant work.

Participants came from far and wide, for example, from San Diego State University, University of Washington, Harvard, McGill, Japan’s Kyushu University, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, and ADA University in Baku. We solicited papers that addressed questions focusing on Central Asia: the “new” Silk Road, regional trade and migration, the Eurasian Union, regional conflict and stability, and local leadership succession scenarios. Individual memos are available here, and a collected volume, Eurasian Visions: Integration and Geopolitics in Central Asia, is available here.

Nazarbayev University is a new institution—the school is still under construction and it was holding the graduation of their very first class at the same time as our workshop. President Nursultan Nazarbayev himself decided to speak at the commencement address, which forced a timetable change of our workshop. We witnessed the flurry of activities to prepare for his arrival, such as roads being paved, flowers planted, and glorious banners hung. Participants had the opportunity to explore Astana, which became the country’s capital quite recently, in 1997. It is a planned city and looks futuristic. Shiny buildings flank long parks and bubbling fountains. Shopping plazas are popular and well stocked with a wide variety of local and international products. To some though, Astana lacked the charm and “real life” that can be found in Almaty. We relied on former George Washington University PhD student and current assistant professor at Nazarbayev University Charles Sullivan to help with organizational issues. He did a great job! [Photo credit: Sasha Schmemann]

Annual Policy Conference

PONARS Eurasia held its annual policy conference in Washington, DC, on September 18-19. With ten panel sessions and thirty-five presenters, it was a busy and enlightening two-day event! Because of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, deterioration in East-West relations, and events in the Middle East, the conference was full of inquiring voices from a diversity of DC spheres—policymakers, think [FROM LEFT] GRAEME ROBERTSON, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, HILARY APPEL, CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE, VLADIMIR GEL’MAN, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY AT ST. PETERSBURG, SCOTT GEHLBACH, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON, MARK KRAMER, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, NIKOLAY PETROV, HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BRIAN TAYLOR, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY.
tankers, academics, and students all took part and got to know each other and exchange ideas. Some of the panel topics were: Ukraine: War, Identity, Reform, and Reconstruction, “The Nature of Putinism,” Security Challenges for Russia and the West, Power and Conflict in Central Asia, Caught in the EU-Russia Crossfire: Belarus, Caucasus, The Ideology of Russian Power, Regional Economics, and Eurasian Society.

The agenda can be found here. Policy Memos related to panels are here. [Photo credit: Joshua Noonan)

Istanbul ~ On February 4-6, 2016, PONARS Eurasia held a policy workshop, "Russia in International Affairs," in Istanbul, Turkey, in collaboration with the Hollings Center for International Dialogue. During a time of Russian-Turkish tension, PONARS Eurasia was pleased to be able to facilitate Russian-Turkish expert dialogue--many of the conference participants were Russian and Turkish citizens.

Panel sessions were held on the following themes: Russian Foreign Policy: Strategy and Culture, The Ukraine Conflict: Rhetoric and Practice, Russia’s Eastern Turn, Understanding the Foreign-Domestic Nexus in Russia, and Black Sea Security after the Ukraine Conflict. A special event, "Making Sense of Russia's Syria Intervention," was held at the Hollings Center.

Most participants visited Istanbul's Sultanahmet square, where the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sofia museum are located. Coming just weeks after a tragic terrorist attack in the heart of Istanbul, participants noted the tension between the popular beauty and rich history of the location and a new level of security, decline in tourism, and rising presence of Syrian refugees. Policy memos from the workshop are already being made available on the PONARS Eurasia website.
On October 15-18, 2015, the IERES Central Asia Program hosted the 16th Annual Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) Conference. The event was co-sponsored by the Elliott School’s Dean Office and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Partnership with Nazarbayev University. Created in 2000, the Central Eurasian Studies Society is an international organization for scholars concerned with the Central Eurasian region. The organization seeks to promote high standards of research and teaching, and to foster communication among scholars of Central Asia. It accomplishes this not only by helping the field to institutionalize and achieve recognition among those ‘area studies’ that are already well established, but also by further integrating it into social sciences and the humanities and promoting interdisciplinary studies.

In keeping with these ideals, the conference was comprised of more than 50 panels featuring state-of-the-art research on a variety of topics concerning the Central Eurasia region. The thematic scope of the panels included politics, history, anthropology, economics, sociology, education, language, and journalism. In addition to providing a platform for presenting research, the panels helped facilitate interactions among scholars at different stages in their career and from different places around the world.

The conference also included a number of cultural programs, including an art exhibition at the George Washington University Textile Museum, a nightly Cinema club with Central Asia films, documentaries, a session of fairytales titled Tales from the Steppes by storyteller Dana Sherry, and a memorable musical performance with Azerbaijani instruments by Jeffrey Werbock.
Books


Articles & Book Chapters


Policy Papers


Soak up the free knowledge!

Numerous policy papers are available at the websites of the Central Asia Program and PONARS Eurasia!

The Winter 2016 issue of Demokratizatsiya contains a special section devoted to the first year anniversary of Boris Nemtsov’s assassination. The articles provide a detailed political biography of Nemtsov, views from various people who knew him, and analyses of his role as a provincial intellectual, campaigner, and critic of the Sochi Olympics. The issue also contains an article analyzing the role of the oligarchs in Ukrainian politics.

Other recent editions of Demokratizatsiya have been devoted to such topics as Ukraine’s local Maidans, Putin’s ideology, new-generation Russian nationalists, and violent corporate raiding (fall 2015) ; the media landscape in Central Asia (summer 2015) ; and Russian political crowdfunding, post-communist leadership, Putin and the Russian regions, and United Russia (spring 2015). Free issues for iPad and nook are available here.
RECENT EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Klaus Segbers (Director of the Center for Global Politics at Freie Universität in Berlin) delivers a lecture at IERES on future perspectives for Russia and Ukraine. This talk was co-sponsored by ESIA’s International and Academic Initiatives office.

Professor Henry Hale during a presentation on Putin and Putinism two years after the Euromaidan in Ukraine. This event was broadcasted on C-SPAN.

Dr. Richard Sakwa, professor of Russian and European Politics at the University of Kent, during his talk “The Ukraine Syndrome and European Monism.”
Panelists from the event “Trends in Russian Public Opinion Under Putin: New Findings.” Findings presented were made possible thanks to support from the National Science Foundation.

Ms. Harriet Mayor Fulbright (on the right) listening to Dr. Rodríguez Jiménez (University of Salamanca, Spain) at the IERES Roundtable Event: “U.S. Public Diplomacy and Democratization in Spain: Selling Democracy?” Ms. Amy Bliss from the U.S. State Department was the discussant.

Francisco J. Rodríguez Jiménez (on the right), research professor at the University of Salamanca, Spain, gave a presentation on US public diplomacy and democratization in Spain.

The Honorable Matthias Platzeck, former Minister-President of Brandenburg State (center), at the event “German Unification Amidst European Disintegration,” co-sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung; on the right, Hope M. Harrison, Associate Dean for Research and IERES Member.
OTHER RECENT IERES EVENTS

In 2015-2016, IERES hosted numerous events covering themes ranging from soccer in Russia to German unification, including:


- **German Unification amidst European Disintegration** - With Matthias Platzeck, Minister-President of Brandenburg, cosponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

- **The History and Politics of the Armenian Genocide after 100 Years** - With Professor Ron Suny, University of Chicago, Associate Dean Hope M. Harrison, and Professor Cory Welt, both GWU. The event was funded by Mr. Shant Mardirossian, Near East Foundation.

- **2018 FIFA World Cup Russia: Political, Economics, and Social Implications** - With Professor Lisa Neirotti, Professor Marlene Laruelle, and Lori Lindsey [professional soccer player, US Women’s National 2011 team], cosponsored by Center on Global Interests.

- **Free to Rock** - Panel discussion on Russian rock ‘n roll, cosponsored by the GW Russian Department and Yaeger Productions.

- **“18 Jus Soli” Screening** - Documentary about multiculturalism in Italy, co-sponsored by the Italian Society and the Department of Romance, German, and Slavic Languages and Literatures.

“**Imperial Gamble**” book event with **Marvin Kalb**, former chief diplomatic correspondent (CBS and NBC), nonresident senior fellow (Brookings Institute), and senior adviser (Pulitzer Center). **Imperial Gamble** takes a critical look at the recent political history of post-Soviet Russia. It journeys deep into Russian and Ukrainian history to explain what keeps them together and yet at the same time drives them apart.

**Superpower: Three Choices for America’s Role in the World.**
Prominent global policy expert **Ian Bremmer** analyzes in his book the increasingly volatile international environment, and explores three choices for the United States, each with its own benefits and drawbacks: Independent America, Moneyball America, or Indispensable America.
From September 22 to September 25, The Central Asia Program at IERES showed four Uzbek films ("You Are Not an Orphan," "Heaven, My Abode," "The Dance of Men," and "Father") and had the honor of hosting Mr. Shukhrat Abbasov (upper left) and Mr. Ayub Shahobiddinov (upper right), directors of the first two films named above. This was a truly momentous occasion to introduce American viewers to the cinema of a region whose contribution to the arts is largely overlooked.
Visiting Scholars
2015-2016

Dr. Ainura Akmatalieva is a senior lecturer in political science at the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University in Bishkek. A Fulbright recipient, Dr. Akmatalieva is undertaking a research project titled “US Strategy in Central Asia: Discursive Traps.” Her research topics include US interests in Central Asia, color revolutions, party strategies, and state development.

Aizhan Arshabayeva, a Bolashak fellow currently hosted by the Central Asia program, is a lecturer on international relations and global development at the Turan-Profi academy in Kazakhstan.

Serik Beisembayev is a sociologist at the Center of social and political studies “Strategy” (Almaty, Kazakhstan). He received his MA in sociology from Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. A previous Bolashak fellow at IERES, he has returned as a Central Asia fellow. He has written several analytical publications on social and political issues of Kazakhstan, and he is currently conducting research on Kazakh nationalism in the context of today’s policy.

Dr. Aurélie Biard is a returning visiting scholar who recently completed her doctoral studies at the Institute d’études politiques de Paris. Her research focuses on religion’s role in politicizing communities, and together with Professor Laruelle, she is teaching a course on Islam and Ethnicity in Central Asia.

Dilorom Boqikhodjaeva has previously worked at Mercy Corps International on a project on Tajikistan’s Stability Enhancement. She also helped Caritas Switzerland with three projects on income generation among marginalized women in rural areas, on access to water, and on energy efficiency. A fellow with the Central Asia program, she currently works as a regional director for Chemonics on a project on land reform and farm restructuring.

Dr. Ion Ciobanu is an associate professor in the Department of Law at Alecu Russo Balti State University (Moldova), as well as a trainer at the Central Electoral Commission. A Fulbright recipient, Dr. Ciobanu has been working with Professor Henry Hale on his research project “Political Parties’ Formation and functioning in Eastern Europe.” Additional interests include electoral systems and human rights.

Giovanna di Mauro is a Ph.D. Candidate at the School of International Relations at the University of St. Andrews (United Kingdom). She is at IERES to conduct research on politically engaged art and artists in post-Soviet Moldova.

Gulzhigit Ermatov is a CAP fellow for the spring 2016 semester. During his fellowship, Mr. Ermatov plans to study various patterns of youth participation in Kyrgyzstan with a focus on their roots and social impact.
Arzu Geybullayeva is a CAP fellow for the spring 2016 semester from Azerbaijan, who received the 2014 Vaclav Havel Journalism Fellowship with Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. During her fellowship, Ms. Geybullayeva will study democratic norms and values in the context of modern-day Azerbaijan.

Dursunjemal Halimova is a CAP fellow for the spring 2016 semester from Turkmenistan. A recent MPA graduate from the School of Public Policy at Central European University, she will be conducting research on the role of information in promoting opportunities for youth development and social engagement in Turkmenistan.

Dr. Iryna Hrabynska is a Petrach Fellow for the spring 2016 semester. A professor of international finance, history of economic thought, and microeconomics at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine), she will be analyzing US support for Ukraine through international financial institutions, as well as cooperation between Ukraine and the IMF.

Sabina Insebayeva is a CAP fellow for the spring 2016 semester. A doctoral candidate in International and Advanced Japanese Studies at the University of Tsukuba, her research at IERES will focus on Kazakhstan’s foreign policy and its positional standing in the international hierarchy.

Kassymkhan Kaparov is a CAP fellow for the spring 2016 semester. A director at the National Bureau for Economic Research of Kazakhstan, he will be researching the increased debt in the quasi-public sector in Kazakhstan and the risks it poses to economic development.

Dr. Svetlana Kozhirova, a Bolashak fellow through the Central Asia Program, is the head of the Eurasian Studies department, professor of general history at Eurasian National University in Almaty. During her stay at IERES, she is looking into border dynamics and security issues between Kazakhstan and China.

Dr. Michal Łuszczuk is an assistant professor in international relations at Maria Curie Sklodowska University in Lublin (Poland), as well as a member of the Committee on Polar Research at the Polish Academy of Sciences and a member of the Polar Task Force in the MFA of Poland. His Fulbright project “Russia and China Relations in the Changing Arctic: Overlapping Interests and Divergences” underscores IERES’ growing role in research on the Arctic region. His work focuses on the geopolitical roles of Arctic and non-Arctic actors in the region, arctic regionalism, and the development of EU and Polish Arctic policies.

Xenia Mironova, a fellow in the Central Asia program, holds an MA in European Studies from the Yerevan State University and an MA in Linguistics and Intercultural Communication from the Russian-Tajik (Slavic) University. She has previously worked to increase access to justice for vulnerable populations in Central Asia, and currently she is working with FAO UN.

“I was one of four lucky graduates of the Public Policy Initiative program who were chosen by the Soros Foundation (Kazakhstan) to spend five months as a Central Asian Program fellow at the IERES. As visiting researchers we have been able to benefit from classes on academic writing, research methods and ethics, public speaking, and grant writing, as well as from the great variety of public lectures and access to leading experts. It has been a great privilege for me to be a part of such a dynamic intellectual environment while literally being next door to some of the most prominent scholars in the field in one of the best places in the world to be a student of political science: Washington, DC.”

- Malika Tukmadieva

“I am honored to be one of few Moldovan Fulbrighters at IERES. My research focuses on the formation and functioning of political parties in Eastern Europe (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova), but due to opportunities that IERES has provided, I have been able to extended my work to include the oligarchic nature of political parties in post-communist Eastern Europe and the role that political parties play in promoting local and regional elites. IERES and the Elliott School are academic environments that have exceeded all my expectations. During my stay, I have attended numerous events that have forced me to review my take on the actual political landscape in post-Soviet states. Also, I have been greatly impressed by the databases and libraries.”

- Dr. Ion Ciobanu
Kairat Mussabekuly is one of four Bolashak fellows currently hosted by the Central Asia Program. In Kazakhstan, he is the assistant secretary of the Nur Otan political party, as well as a researcher on international relations and global development.

Dr. Mykola Riabchuk, a visiting Fulbright scholar, is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Political and Nationalities’ Studies in Kyiv. His current research interests are centered on the construction of modern Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarussian identities as part of an East Slavonic “imagined community.”

Malika Tukmadiyeva holds a Master of Arts in Political Science and Security in Central Asia from the OSCE Academy (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan) and Master of Advances Studies in International and European Security from the University of Geneva (Geneva, Switzerland). She has several years of working experience in the Kazakhstani civil sector in such areas as youth empowerment and environmental issues. A fellow in the Central Asia program, she is currently conducting research on influence of Central Asian migration on business processes in Kazakhstan and examining the population registration system (“propiska”) in Central Asia.

Dr. Alexandra Yatsyk is the head of the Center of Post-Socialism and a professor of sociology at Kazan Federal University (Russia). A PONARS member, she is using her Carnegie fellowship to conduct research on representations of post-Soviet national identities in Ukraine, Georgia, and Estonia. Her research interests also touch upon sports/cultural mega-events, Russia’s protest art, and biopolitics.

Dr. Raushan Yelmurzayeva, a Bolashak fellow with the Central Asia Program, is head of the International Relations Department at Eurasian National University in Almaty. Her research touches upon migration processes throughout Eurasia.

The First IERES Visiting Scholar Symposium, where our visiting researchers presented their projects and gained useful insight and reviews from IERES faculty and their peers.

IN OTHER NEWS...

- We are pleased to announce several additions to our staff! Help us welcome Cayla Vega (Program Assistant, Central Asia Program), Eileen Jorns (Program Assistant, PONARS), and Aitolkyn Kurmanova (Program Assistant, Central Asia Program).
- Professor Robert Orttung recently completed a fellowship at the Kennan Institute.
- Beginning in March 2016, Professor Henry E. Hale will begin a fellowship at the National Endowment for Democracy.
Gifts and Giving Opportunities

IERES is grateful for support from individuals, foundations, and corporations for its activities. This funding helps make possible some of our most important activities: supporting outstanding students; sponsoring research conducted by students and professors; organizing events that bring together students, professors and outside experts; and more.

Support Our Programs and Events

In 2015, IERES hosted more than 1,200 participants at 40 events including panel discussions, film screenings, conferences, and academic workshops. Support for IERES helps the Institute sponsor a wide range of events, which attract students, professors, and practitioners from various fields.

Support Our Students

Contributions to IERES support graduate students scholarships for study abroad programs, language courses, internships, and research projects in Europe and Eurasia.

Support Our Research Initiatives

IERES is home to over 30 faculty members who are active in their fields, writing books, articles, and opinion pieces and lecturing in the US and abroad. The Institute also hosts several visiting scholars each year from institutions around the world. Supporting IERES research projects enables faculty and visiting scholars to continue their research activities both at the Institute and in the field.

To donate to any of the activities of IERES

Please contact the Elliott School’s Development Office at (202) 994-9490 or mail a check, payable to The George Washington University, with IERES specified in the memo line, to:

The Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies
ATTN: Evan Alterman
1957 E Street NW, Suite 412
Washington, D.C. 20052

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 994-6340 – IERES Director Peter Rollberg

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